THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER

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DECEMBER 1950
Vol. I No. 12

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IN WHICH WE LIVE

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OUR NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Sir John Maud, formerly Fellow of University College, Oxford, University Lecturer in Politics, and Master of Birkbeck College, London, was a temporary civil servant throughout the war (in the Ministry of Food and the office of the Minister of Reconstruction) and since 1945 has been Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education. He has published books on Local and City Government.

J. Fraser McLuskey, formerly Chaplain to the University of Glasgow, has been on the staff of the Army Chaplains' Training Centre for the last three years. He is the author of *Parachute Padre*, to be published shortly, an account of his war-time experiences with the Special Air Service Regiment. He is now minister of Broughty Ferry East.

Alexander Miller, author of *The Christian Significance of Karl Marx*, etc., and former joint-Editor of *The Presbyter*, is Lecturer in Religion on the faculty of Stanford University, California.

THE
FRONTIER
A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

Vol. I. No. 12. DECEMBER 1950

FROM THE EDITORS TO THE READERS

IT is right and fitting, we feel, in this concluding number of the first volume of *The Frontier*, that we should first call our readers together, as it were, for a brief and informal business meeting. Lest these words excite the usual misgivings in your minds, we hasten to add that the financial audit is rather more than satisfactory, and the prospects for our future sufficiently encouraging. It is chiefly for other reasons that we wish to give some account of our stewardship; to draw a few conclusions from one year's experience and to say how we hope to apply them, with your assistance, in the year ahead. But we will begin with a few words on our business position, since it enables us to disclose a piece of news which we are sure everyone will welcome.

There is to be a substantial reduction in the annual subscription rate, and single copies are going to be cheaper and more available, from our next issue onwards. An announcement which is so surprising in the stringent circumstances of to-day, perhaps calls for a little explanation here, especially as you, our readers, are to be congratulated on having made it possible. When *The Frontier* was launched a year ago, no one could tell what support it would attract. We knew that it would have the support of many who had subscribed to its predecessor *The Christian News-Letter*, but

we did not know how many. The annual subscription was therefore fixed at the same rate for the monthly *Frontier* as it had been for the fortnightly *Letter* which was rather less than half its size. But as it turns out, previous readers have rallied massively to the new organ, which has also gained a number of fresh subscribers. Moreover, the journal soon acquired some revenue by its success as an advertizing medium. In these circumstances, it has been found possible, and thought well worth while, to take the risk of reducing the subscription rate from £1 to 12s. 6d. and the price of single copies to 1s, in the hope and belief that this will increase our circulation. This is no small venture, in days when prospective costs show no sign whatever of ceasing to go up and up. But we know from our correspondence that many who want to take *The Frontier*, and whom we are eager to number among our readers, have to their keen regret found the present subscription rate prohibitive. It will be a great help if you will make the new arrangement as widely known as possible. We also invite you to make use of the Christmas gift scheme, concerning which a leaflet is enclosed with this issue.[1]

Now to more essential matters; for it would profit a journal nothing to gain even a world circulation and forget its own purpose. *The Frontier* was designed to carry on the spirit of the *C.N-L.* in a slightly different and expanded form of publication. True to this aim, we have put forth nothing but what we thought pertinent (in the words of our prospectus) to "the quest for a clearer understanding of contemporary tasks and problems in the light of the Christian faith": and our first year's work has opened up a wide range of such tasks and problems, in which readers and colleagues of ours are personally involved. Indeed, as we anticipated, there was some danger of diffuseness and dis-

[1] We may add that all subscriptions in hand at the end of 1950 will be counted at the new rate from January, 1951, onwards, and subscribers will be informed when a renewal of their subscription becomes due.

continuity during the first year, while we have been collecting our forces; and partly for that reason we decided sometimes to concentrate a whole issue upon one topic, or group of related topics. We have done this twice already, with our African and Palestinian numbers, with results that have been appreciated, and we expect that it will be worth doing again from time to time. Many instructive and cogent contributions have been made to other numbers, and taken as a whole they convey, we believe, a fair impression of the spirit and outlook that are summed up in the words "Christian Frontier". But to develop a fully consistent and continuous direction of its own, a journal needs something more than this. Especially it requires two things that we emphasized as desirable in our statement of a year ago—namely, controversy and correspondence.

Of the latter, our experience has been somewhat baffling. The smaller post-bag of *The Frontier*, compared with that of the *C.N-L.* can be partly accounted for by its less frequent publication and by the fact that *The Frontier* is in form much like what is rather horribly called a "magazine", whereas a news-*letter* makes it easier for the reader to realize that he is being personally addressed and expected to answer if the spirit moves him. We have of course received a good many letters (though few that were either intended or suitable for publication) and these have always been eagerly read, promptly acknowledged, and often laid to heart; but they have been too few to give us a sense of adequate contact with our public. There are two ways in which we can try to remedy this.

One, for what it may be worth, we will try next year: we will write our editorials more in the style of a monthly letter. A more effective means may prove to be that which is represented by the Luncheon meetings, the second of which is to be held this month. These should enable *Frontier* readers to meet each other and the members of the Christian Frontier Council whose concerns are, after all, just the same as yours and ours. Although relatively few of you

may be able to attend even occasional meetings in London, we believe that these gatherings, of at least a substantial number, will spread a more communicative mood among the rest.

For we sometimes fear we have readers who think of *The Frontier* as an organ of the Council (who are indeed its sponsors) and of the Council (barring individual members they may have met) as a closed circle of aloof and preoccupied persons. If so there is an imaginary partition to be broken down. There is nothing in the least esoteric or remote about the Frontier Council: its proceedings have the character of an open conversation between friends upon questions of the common life of our times. What has appeared in the Council's publications has been mainly the result, indirectly, of their deliberations. In the present number, however, we give direct reports of some of the proceedings, so that you may, as it were, listen in to two members of the Council talking. The address of our founder, Dr. J. H. Oldham, was delivered this autumn at the Council's annual conference, a gathering consisting, by the way, of friends and associates as well as of formal members. The speech by Sir John Maud, a report of which follows Dr. Oldham's in this issue, was given at the October luncheon meeting to nearly 250 *Frontier* readers and represents the kind of informal statements on perplexing issues that are constantly being made in Council meetings or exchanged in memoranda between its members. And the two letters, raising objections to what Sir John Maud said, which appear on later pages, are fairly typical of the free debate that has abounded in meetings of the Council ever since its earliest days. Another and longer letter comes from a member of the Council in remonstrance at our own editorial line last month: and the points of view expressed in these challenging letters will doubtless be subjected, in coming issues, to further critical examination in which we hope some of you will join.

This question of intercommunication and the need for improving it has used up what time we have for this meeting

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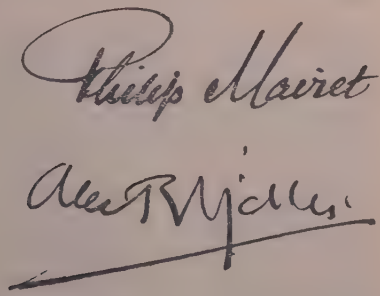
with you. We want *The Frontier* to be in every sense a corporate enterprise. Realizing, however, that little can be done by exhortation, we have in the present number tried the effect of example—a method which, if you approve, we shall endeavour to carry on into 1951.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the invaluable help we have had from the colleagues who meet every month to discuss our plans for the forthcoming issue of the journal. In June the C.F.C. formally constituted our advisory group as an Editorial Board, adding to it two members of their own. The Board that now meets consists of :—

Mr. L. J. Edwards, M.P.[1]
Dr. Edna Roe
Mr. A. W. James
The Rev. David McCaughey
The Rev. E. H. Robertson
Mr. A. C. F. Beales
Mr. George Goyder

and we have also the assistance of Mr. W. G. Symons and Professor C. A. Coulson as corresponding members. It is with very sincere gratitude to these collaborators, and to our generous contributors, that your Editors sign themselves



[1] Whose resignation, owing to the demands of his new office at the Treasury, we have just regretfully accepted.

THE TWO ORDERS IN WHICH WE LIVE

IN the fourth chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians we read: The things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

It may help to understanding if I make clear at the beginning the question to which I am seeking an answer. It often happens that there is a lack of communication because the speaker is trying to answer one question, while in the mind of the hearer there is present, consciously or unconsciously, another different question, and what is said is obviously not an answer to that other question. The question to which I am directing what I say now is whether, the world being what it is and contemporary experience what it is, without willingly shutting our eyes or closing our minds to any aspect of that experience, there is a way of looking at the world which will give us our bearings in a bewildering situation, any solid ground on which we can stand in trying to deal with it, any faith in which we can meet life and triumph over it.

The Church and Society

The core of the Christian message is that new life came into the world in Christ. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. That, for us here, whatever theological construction we may put upon it, is simple historical fact.

It is the totality of human existence that this new life is meant to transform. The Church is not a sphere separate and distinct from the activities by which men feed and clothe and house themselves and order their relations with one another and develop their human capacities. It is manifest in the redemption by the power of the Gospel of men's actual, present lives. The test of Christianity is whether it is a faith by which men can live in the work-a-day world. The test is the *exposed*, not the sheltered, life. It was to give

practical embodiment to that conviction that the Christian Frontier Council was founded.

The Modern Ambition

The business of Christian living presents us to-day with new problems. Our lot is cast in a society in which human enterprises are becoming increasingly collective enterprises, even, we might perhaps say, parts of a single vast collective enterprise in which humanity is trying by science and techniques to control and shape both its environment and itself. That seems to be the impulse and hope that inspires the activities alike of capitalist America and communist Russia, and is working as a ferment in the awakening peoples of Asia and Africa.

How then, as Christians, are we to judge an ambition which has become, consciously and unconsciously, the driving force of the modern world? Clearly there can be no single and unambiguous answer to that question, since the enterprise in practice embraces inevitably both what is best and what is worst in human nature. But in one respect—in so far, that is to say, as the enterprise is an assertion of man s responsibility—the Christian judgement must be, I believe, an unequivocal assent. That man is a responsible being is a fundamental Christian conception.

Human Responsibility

Yet precisely at this point there is a deep cleavage between the modern temper and what is thought to be the Christian view. Pere de Lubac, the French Jesuit, has called attention to the remarkable fact that the Christian idea of the sublimity of man's vocation as the son of a loving heavenly father, which came to the ancient world as the glad news of an immense deliverance, freeing men from subjection to hazard and blind fate, and lifting them on a new wave of hope, is to-day felt—widely felt, not only thought but *felt*—as an unwelcome yoke, depriving man of a greatness, freedom and responsibility that are properly his own. Christianity has to come to terms with this modern attitude

which has deep roots in practical experience. It is impossible for the modern man to divest himself of the experience of the past three or four centuries in the conquest of nature. As against those who in the presence of evil supinely wait for God to intervene, surely the man is right who takes the burden on his own shoulders and by his painfully acquired knowledge and skill, by his labours and endurance, triumphs over the most formidable obstacles. Christians have too often erred by making reliance on God an excuse for evading a responsibility they were meant to bear. Is it not the Christian view of man that he has been created to be God's partner in the continuing work of creation, entrusted by God with a great and high responsibility? The story in Genesis does not suggest that man was placed in a finished universe, but that he was called to co-operate with God in the fulfilment of His creative purpose.

But, whatever may be the theological answer to the question of the relation of man's responsibility to God's over-ruling Providence, man's responsibility for shaping his world and society is hardly for you to whom I am speaking an open question. As members of Parliament, civil servants, scientists, educators, industrialists you are inextricably involved in the great collective human enterprise of transforming the world by man's labour, knowledge and skill. The question for you is whether you can find an ultimate Christian meaning in the work you are doing day by day. My own answer is a decisive Yes. You are the partners of God in His work in creation. I believe that the Church needs to declare that truth with greater explicitness, clarity, and emphasis than it has for the most part done in the past or is doing at present.

The World of Selves

But when we have said that, we have uttered only half, perhaps the lesser half, of the truth about human existence. It is the lesser half, because in this business of discovery, of making things, of planning and organizing, only part of

ourselves is engaged. We do our day's work and go home. *We* go home.

The world which we seek to transform by our knowledge and planning has been called by Gabriel Marcel, the French philosopher, the *problematic* world. It is a world in which we are constantly meeting problems and trying to find the right answers to them. But when you are dealing with a problem the self that is seeking a solution is taken for granted —inevitably taken for granted, because attention is focused on the problem. The world to-day has become so absorbed in mastering problems, that it has to a large extent left entirely out of account the self that thinks and decides and acts—the unifying centre in all scientific enquiry and production and planning, the self that can never be completely resolved by analysis into its component parts. Over against every kind of objectivization stands in unbridgeable difference the free subject. It is this world of self-determining subjects that is that other, more important, half of human existence that is constantly forgotten in the absorbing ambition of man to transform his world. To those who have caught even a glimpse of the reality of this world of selves the question has the same force as when it was first spoken: What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?

Response

What are the characteristics of this world of selves?

In the first place, in this other aspect of his existence man is not primarily, as he is almost wholly in the thinking of many people to-day, an investigator, judge, manipulator, controller and director of things. He is rather one who is laid hold of—not one that apprehends so much as one that is apprehended. Reality is disclosed to him and commands him. He is confronted by *value*, by *truth*, which he has not made but *finds*, which he cannot alter, to which he can only surrender himself.

"Beauty itself doth of itself persuade."

He experiences *grace*—the unbought grace of life. I am using the word in a wider than the specifically Christian sense. "Bereft of this inward light of grace," it has been said by a writer, whom I have no reason for supposing to be a Christian, "life is utterly undone". When it is withdrawn

> There's nothing serious in mortality.
> All is but toys; renown, and grace is dead;
> The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
> Is left this vault to brag of.

In the *moral* sphere, reality may be encountered as an unconditional demand, on our response to which our very selfhood may depend.

Other Selves

Secondly, selves are related not only to a world which they endeavour to transform but to other selves. The two relations are uninterchangeably different. In the world which we attempt to control and shape by our knowledge and skill we encounter no obstacle which is not *in principle* surmountable; an increase of knowledge, a more powerful machine would overcome the difficulty that now baffles us. But another self confronts us in the inviolability of his selfhood. He can be bent to our purpose only by depriving him of that selfhood.

One of the greatest of the dangers that beset our society is the common assumption that, because science and technics have met with astounding success in mastering materials and machines, they can be equally serviceable in organizing human beings. This may be a fundamental error. It may belong to the very essence of a self that there is in it an innate self-respect which, if a man is denied the opportunity of giving an intelligent and willing assent to what is wanted of him, compels him to refuse that assent.

With other selves we can live only in an unceasing tension, in which none claims as of right to have the final and decisive word—a tension that is overcome only in perfect

love, in which each acknowledges the self-hood of the other and seeks its realization equally with his own.

To those whose eyes have been opened to the world of selves—of persons and groups of persons encountering one another with their separate and contrary purposes—it is a reality of human existence more fundamental than the collective enterprise of transforming the world. The *real* world is the world which to-day is so largely forgotten and ignored—the world of *spirit*, of *persons* and of *freedom*.

Guilt and Salvation

Thirdly, when we turn aside from our absorption in problems and look at the selves engaged in dealing with them, we find ourselves face to face with a whole dimension of failure, faithlessness and lovelessness.

While I was engaged in the preparation of this address I read in a novel what a father, not on the whole a bad man, but a man of uncontrolled temper, did in a fit of rage to his small son, that made me almost physically sick. I realized that such unspeakable acts of violence against the innocence and tenderness of childhood are taking place every day all over the world. If through God's mercy we here are incapable of committing such acts, which of us can reflect on our relations with those we most love without recalling the injuries we have done them by our ill-temper and our selfishness, and the endless ways in which we have failed and deserted them.

Again, there are the unintended, undesired and often unforeseeable effects of all public action. President Truman and the United Nations decided, rightly as most of us believe, so that the action is also our action, that aggression must be resisted. The consequences are the slaughter of tens or hundreds of thousands of Koreans, the terror and torment of multitudes, the break-up of homes, the abject misery of a whole population. In seeking righteous ends we are creating in Korea an earthly hell. And the awful thing is that we may so easily become complacent about what we are doing.

When we look honestly at our actual selves, we have to confess with William James that " such a sense of the vanity and provisionality of our voluntary career comes over us, that all our *well-doing* appears the hollowest substitute for that *well-being* that our lives ought to be grounded in, but alas ! are not ".

In other words, when we take the self seriously, we cannot evade the fact of guilt, which the modern world, absorbed in the solution of problems, persistently pushes to one side. If we do this, we are not dealing realistically with the actuality and totality of human experience.

When we know what we really are, the cry cannot but break from us, What must I do to be *saved*—saved from my miserable, all-spoiling self ? What consolation is left to us apart from Grace ? What real hope is there for us unless there is, as Christianity asserts, a transcendent Other, a divine Lover, who accepts us in all our inadequacy, rottenness and treachery—we need to be accepted, unless we are to be deprived of all status in the universe, and, if we are to be accepted, we can, being what we are, be accepted only in our adequacy, rottenness and treachery—who forgives us what we cannot forgive ourselves, and gives us back new life in His service and partnership ? I do not know what real refuge and security there is for the human spirit unless we can say

> *His* love, not mine, the resting-place
> *His* truth, not mine, the tie.

The Relation of the Two Orders

How, in conclusion, are these two orders which we have been considering related to one another ? In the task of building the earthly city, each of the distinctive human activities is subject in large measure to its own laws. Consequently, as Professor Ernst Michel says, " the life of the Christian in the world and his activity in it are to a large extent hardly distinguished from those of his fellows ". In most matters he decides as men of good-will generally would

decide. But none the less, Professor Michel goes on, his action " has a different, invisible fundamental structure, into which the lived experience of every day is absorbed and in which it is inwardly transformed and renewed ".

What is this different, invisible fundamental structure of the Christian's action ? Is it not that it is the action of one who, while building diligently the earthly city, has his conversation in heaven ? *Work* has a different inner quality when it is offered daily to God in prayer. The poison of self-seeking has been extracted from it.

Again, the man who is aware of the world of persons knows his own finitude. He is aware of his dependence on other men. He is ready to listen, alert always for the encounter. From those who have this sensitiveness to persons there enters into society a continuous stream of healing, humanizing, vitalizing influences. Those who hold converse with Christ, whose lives are ruled by the supernatural virtues of faith, hope and love, dispense around them what St. Paul called a savour, an aroma, a fragrance of life unto life.

> " Love, from its awful throne of patient power . . .
> . . . folds over the world its healing wings."

In these ways our temporal life is shot through with fragmentary anticipations of the eternal order and foretastes of the heaven of love which is our home.

J. H. Oldham.

INTERIM

Craven Street Entrance

Craven Street, which runs from the Strand to Northumberland Avenue, has to outward appearance little to be said for it, except as a short-cut. But it contains the unpretentious entrance to the splendid assembly hall of the Royal Empire Society, where the first Frontier Luncheon was held on October 25th. About two hundred and fifty readers and friends of *The Frontier* gathered here for a buffet lunch and conversazione, followed by the address of Sir John Maud that is reproduced in this issue. The Editors and the members of the Frontier Council were delighted to meet so many old and new friends. It had been anyone's guess how many would be able to come. A remarkable and encouraging fact was the large proportion of guests who had thought it worthwhile to come up from the provinces; indeed some readers came specially for the occasion from so far afield as Yorkshire and Lancashire. The hosts wore rosettes of gold and crimson (the colours of *The Frontier*!).

The more formal part of the proceedings was presided over by Mr. George Goyder, chairman of the committee that made the arrangements. The whole company gave a particularly warm welcome to Dr. J. H. Oldham and Dr. Kathleen Bliss. After Sir John Maud had spoken, there was a short time for discussion, to which some good contributions were made. This occasion was of a very happy augury for closer personal relations between *The Frontier* and its readers, and the announcement that further Luncheons would be held at about two monthly intervals was greeted with acclamation, even by those who had found that the numbers present and the pressure of time made access to a sufficiency of eatables difficult! Arrangements will be made to allow more room for movement at the next Luncheon, which is announced for Wednesday, December 20th. At this the chair is to be taken by Dr. Edna Roe, who is a member both of the Frontier Council and of the editorial board of *The Frontier*. The address will be given by Mr. L. John Edwards, O.B.E., M.P., Economic Secretary to the Treasury, on "Living and Working Together". Tickets (5s. each) can be obtained from the Christian Frontier, 8 The Cloisters, Windsor Castle.

Report on Gambling

An " ethical discussion ", in the form of a report presented to the Church Assembly by its Social and Industrial Commission, produced a considerable uproar of debate in that House before it was even " received ", and it was commended for study only gingerly and with reserve. It had already been criticized in the press, where some earnest divines had demanded the repudiation of a statement which they thought would undermine all belief that gambling was a sin. Less reverend critics had spread rumours that the report would amount to a " Tipster's Charter " or a " New Deal for Old Firms " : but people who accepted any such travesty of the document can hardly have read it. A good hammer-and-tongs argument in the Assembly now and again may be no bad thing at this stage of its development : but of course that was not the intention of having a report. There is probably no activity, unidentifiable as sin in itself, which gives occasion and incentive for so much sordid sinning : and it is an irony of circumstance that what is, superficially, the nearest thing to a religious justification of gaming and betting should turn up at the very time when the extension of its popularity and the increase of its abuses have reached alarming proportions.

* * * *

We should say that the Commission's booklet does read a little more like a " defence " of the right to back one's fancy than it need have done—or than its authors probably meant it to. They could have avoided this, partly at least, had they reversed the order of their discourse, dealing with the later questions first and *vice versa*. But like all good philosophers, they began by defining and analysing their subject, and this compelled them early to divulge the fact that wagering, betting, and gambling cannot be defined as inherently sinful. A long line of ethical thinkers (the Commissioners can and do adduce authoritative tradition) have always known this, but the ordinary " man in the pew " sees only the manifest squalors of the gambling world, and the dangerous temptations it evidently holds. The idea that, if he could gamble without wickedness, he himself would soon be wagering away the last pawnticket for the children's clothes, may not actually fill him with dread ; but what about his weaker brethren ? He may easily think that in the first section of this report its authors are giving the devil a gratuitous wash and brush-up.

* * * *

It is arguable that such a report should not have been asked for—that the need of the hour was first for a practical, factual report on the specific evils discernible in gambling and its latter-day extensions, as a basis for remedial action. But even that would have raised, at a later stage, moral-theological questions of which this report is a very learned and balanced elucidation. The two parties of passionately earnest and convinced disputants into which it divided the Church Assembly are really looking at two different phases of the question. Both, we believe, ought to re-read the document and do some fresh thinking about it. There are weak points, such as its ineffective section on the Stock Exchange. But it is full of wisdom and edification on a topic of grave significance to our age, and has the merit of being unusually well written.

"The Vindication of Hope"

The article under this title in our November issue appeared, by a most regrettable oversight, without a footnote reference to the book it was about. This was Professor John Baillie's *The Belief in Progress*, published by the Oxford University Press at 10s. 6d. We tender our sincere apology to author, publishers and readers.

Binding the "Frontier"

If experience with the *C.N-L.* is anything to go by, a good many of our subscribers will want to have their copies of Volume I bound together. This will be undertaken by our publishers, Basil Blackwell & Mott, Ltd., 49 Broad Street, Oxford, to whom sets should be posted marked *FRONTIER*: BINDING. The charge for this service will be 8s., inclusive of the special binding case. Readers who make their own arrangements for binding can obtain this case from Blackwells at 2s. 6d.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE PERSON IN THE PLANNED SOCIETY

A Talk given by Sir John Maud, K.C.B., C.B.E.,
at a Frontier Lunch,
25th October, 1950

I DON'T know whether any of you have seen a film I saw recently called " The Wooden Horse ". In effect it is a documentary of an actual escape from a British R.A.F. prison camp in Germany. The memory of that film stays with me, and I want to start our consideration of " the survival of the person in the planned society " with a picture of the prisoner-of-war camp—a planned society of people who are apparently impotent, appallingly lonely, and slaves. In his book about the Black Watch, Bernard Fergusson described some of the prisoners of war that he had known as having " led captivity captive "—and I think he had in mind not only those that got away. I want to suggest that we too—in this country, in Europe, in the world—are now prisoners of the precarious peace ; and that there is something that we can learn from the experience of the prisoner of war. What we have to do is to lead captivity captive.

We are prisoners of the peace, though we may not realize it ; prisoners in a far country, the country which the prodigal son left his home to find, where he had some riotous living and in the end became attached to a local citizen and hungrily fed swine. I find myself wondering whether our position isn't even more desperate than that of the prisoners of war. They at least knew what their prison walls were : they could see them ; and they knew where home was, and what their duty was—to escape if they could, re-join their unit, and carry on the fight. But we only have some vague feeling that this is not our home and that we are imprisoned, and ought to rebel. What then, in a world like this, ought we to do—we who profess and call ourselves Christians ?

Right Causes for Rebellion

The first thing I suggest is that we should rebel against the sense of impotence. This sense is one of the most striking characteristics of the planned society (and by the planned society I mean not only the United Kingdom semi-planned society but also ourselves as part of a world society which is hardly planned at all). Perhaps it appears most clearly in our friends who work in very large organizations, or live in the suburbs of great towns, and feel utterly separated from "them"—from the people who make the plans and expect others somehow to conform. So our first duty is to raise the standard of rebellion against the fallacy that we are impotent, because as Christians we know that we are not; to accept our responsibility to God for this world, however planned or unplanned we find it; and humbly to say, "I will do something about this human situation". Whether it be my own Ministry or my home or an international conference I go to, or any other part of the human situation of which people in this room have knowledge at first hand, let us rebel against this fallacy that we can do nothing about that situation; let us accept responsibility to God for action.

Secondly, I believe that we should rebel against the fallacy of loneliness: against the fallacy of supposing that we live alone in this crowded small world (which is yet such a vast world for me, and for each one of us); the fallacy that we are inevitably cut off from those living in the next villa, or in the other flat, or working beside us in the office or the factory. We should rebel against this loneliness, and accept God's offer of collaboration with him. You may remember a phrase of A. E. Housman's which was often quoted when I was a schoolboy:

> And how am I to face the odds
> Of man's bedevilment and God's—
> I, a stranger and afraid,
> In a world I never made?

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That is a question which we Christians have still got to try to answer for ourselves and for our neighbour. And this idea of rebellion against loneliness, this acceptance of God's collaboration with us, suggests to me three ways in which we can act.

First of all, through friendship; through the kind of personal spontaneous collaboration with like-minded people, which all of us have known, in one form or another, and which, thanks to Dr. Oldham's initiative, some of us have experienced in the Frontier Council. I put personal friendship first because it is the beginning as well as the end of what I have to say.

The Necessity of Impersonal Relationships

But personal friendship isn't enough. We have to accept collaboration with God through those *impersonal* relationships as well, which can be summed up in the word " plans ". The planned society is one in which there is a multitude of organizations of which each one of us is consciously or unconsciously a member. I believe we Christians have got to face the fact of organization, and thank God for it: indeed I personally am convinced that we do God a great wrong if we rule out this impersonal method of collaboration as being man-made and not potentially a part of his kingdom. This second aspect of collaboration, which I find more difficult than the first, is something we Christians have to fight for, rebelling against the nonsense that to work in a big organization or have " plans " is necessarily inhuman. It is impersonal, certainly; but God can use both the organization and the people in it in such a way that it becomes an impersonal means to a personal end. Collaboration in this second sense may involve us in the working of such organizations as exist, or in trying to change them, or in the construction of organizations which do not exist. But that is something to which I will come back in a moment.

The third way in which we can act is by worship. If we are to let God use our friendships and our impersonal rela-

tions, we must have a rhythm of work and worship. In one sense this is essentially something private. It means that we have got to fight the clock for time to be alone. But it also means that, whatever we may think of institutional Christianity or of our own particular bit of the Church, we must take the trouble to collaborate as members of a believing community in what is symbolized by public as well as private worship.

Under my first two heads it is for us laymen to take the initiative: we cannot wait for any ecclesiastical or other kind of institutional lead in our personal friendships or our impersonal relations; but in this third kind of collaboration with God we laymen have to offer our bounden duty and service, and expect the "specialists", the parsons and the rest of them, to direct our worship and help us to make our full contribution.

Personalising the Impersonal

Now I want to go back to what is the most difficult part of this programme. I myself work in a fairly small Ministry, compared with many others, and I know how desperately difficult it is for that Government Department to become an impersonal instrument for doing God's work for *persons*: yet I am absolutely clear that that is its one purpose and its one justification for existing.

I think the way in which this can be done (and I mention it because I believe it is relevant to the industrial field, and others of which I have no first-hand experience) is first through the work of the imagination. There is a tradition in the Civil Service which I will call the tradition of the iceberg; i.e., that your private life is your own affair, and to your colleagues in the office you reveal only a little of the whole of you. But I am quite sure that my Ministry can only be as good as God means it to be if everyone in it tries by an act of imagination to perceive and recognize the person in the iceberg. I must realize that each of my colleagues, and every person who writes a letter or visits

the Ministry (and who may rather resemble a volcano than an iceberg) is not only officially related to me, but also has a liver (which may be in poor condition) or a wife or a husband (who may be in poor condition) or a bank balance (which may be in poor condition) and that each one of them is an immortal soul for whom Christ died. It is partly because that kind of creative imagination is possible that it isn't nonsense to talk of government departments or of other large organizations as potential instruments of God's will.

Decision and Explanation

But imagination is not enough. There has also to be justice. There has to be a just relationship, in this impersonal world of the organization, both among the people working inside it and also between them and the people outside it whom they serve; and this same justice is also needed between one organization and another, whether we think of those contained within a national frontier or of the world of nations. In my Ministry (if I may again be personal) I know that I, being on what we call the official or managerial side, must take decisions; but I also know that if those decisions are to be just I must take the largest possible amount of time and trouble that I can spare, before I take the decision, to listen to the people who have to carry it out. Then I have to weigh what they tell me of how my decision would react on them with what its reaction on parents and teachers is likely to be. Then I have to make my judgement; but having done so I have also somehow to explain, particularly to the people who do not agree with that decision, why it was taken. That process of listening, decision, and explanation is one small example of what I call justice within the organization.

The Supreme Contribution

But having said that, I realize quite well that I have still left out what is, for a Christian, the most important thing

of all. Let us by all means regard " the rule of law " as an indispensable technique (which we in this country have a special responsibility for continuing to develop) not only for working out our own pattern of society, but for helping the nations of the world to relate themselves to each other as God wills : let us indeed regard it as an instrument of God's collaboration with man. But quite clearly it is not enough. This is where we need to go beyond justice, and seek what St. Paul calls " the more excellent way ". If we believe, as I do, that organization and plans are potentially means of the divine grace, we must constantly remind ourselves that by their very nature their possibilities are strictly limited. So we must rebel again—this time against the utopian fallacy that all that is needed to make the human situation good is to put the organization right. Indeed, if we are trying to be Christians, our principal concern in all these relationships must be what I will call charity. This must be not only in our personal dealings with our friends, but also in this institutional world where, quite rightly, we have grades and ranks, where this person decides and that person obeys (because that is a necessary part of organization) : even there also there must be the spirit of the Master who washed his disciples' feet—there must be love. " Ye call me Master and Lord : and ye say well ; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." That is the supreme contribution that Christians can make. However anxious we are that there should be justice in this impersonal world, and however determined we are to work these impersonal instruments for all they are worth, there must be in us, particularly if we are in authority, the mood and mind of the Saviour when he washed his disciples' feet. That is completely consistent with decisiveness, with leadership, with unpopularity, with all the things that justice may demand ; but it goes beyond them and transfigures them ; and " without charity " they are " nothing ".

The Gospel in Action

My conclusion is that each one of us, however pathetic our present performance as Christians may be, has an indispensable contribution to make towards relieving our present discontents. In this world of loneliness and impotence and inhumanity, we have the incomparable privilege of believing that we are indeed in a far country but that we have a home to return to. About that home we know only very dimly; but we have a clue. We know that this planned society in which we talk about the survival of the person *can* be a great fellowship, unconfined by any national frontiers or by any frontier between employer and employed, or skilled or unskilled: a world in which persons not merely survive, but find fullness of life and are revealed as the sons of God. The proclamation of this gospel depends in particular on *action* by us laymen in the several parts of society in which we live; for the phrases, and particularly the *clichés*, of Christianity obscure for the huge majority of our fellow creatures what in fact they almost all of them passionately want. And I believe that it is only through our determination to revolt against the devil and all his works in each particular human situation in which we find ourselves—empowered by the Holy Spirit to recognize our present prison walls and escape and find our home—that the kingdoms of this world can indeed become the kingdom of the sons of God.

A WAVE OF THE HAND

I NEVER seem to arrive at the right time for the boat train from Harwich: either I am an hour too early because the train is running in one portion and is later in starting on its way, or else the person I am due to meet arrives, on a two-portion day, on the first train and wins the race to Liverpool Street Station. Such was the case this morning, and when I hurried down the steps to the boat-train platform there was my friend already waiting and looking just as strange as a German visitor might look on arrival for his first holiday in England. It was not his first visit to English soil: that had occurred nine years earlier in somewhat different fashion. His first operational flight as a young Luftwaffe wireless-operator brought him to the English coast near Newcastle, and a fine old English welcome brought his plane and himself to earth in sudden and unexpected fashion. None the worse for his crash landing he was duly placed "in the bag" and had only a fleeting glimpse of war-time England as he passed from camp to camp en route for Canada and a not unpleasant sojourn in the lumber camps there. No doubt his arrival on this occasion by boat-train seemed by comparison an anti-climax. At all events he stood there, a tall and handsome figure, looking a little bewildered until suddenly he caught sight of me as I hurried towards him.

It was then that he waved his hand; had he waved a fairy wand I could not have been more effectively whisked from the all too solid realities of Liverpool Street at 8.20 a.m. All that he did was to move his right hand two or three times in a coy, staccato fashion, but that was quite enough. Without the doubtful pleasures of boat-trains and Channel steamers I was back in the busy industrial centre of Wuppertal-Elberfeld and the year was 1938. I stood again at the first-floor window of the language school, looking out to see what the excitement in the street was all about. It was

a convoy of lorried German infantry passing through. The crowds lining the streets cheered enthusiastically: the troops sat bolt upright along the sides of the lorries and moved not at all—except for their right hands which, with coy, staccato movements, acknowledged the welcome. I wondered in my youthful way why they couldn't wave like ordinary people—British people! The intervening years have reconciled me to the fact that we do not all wave alike: there are waves and waves. Heading the list and in a class by itself there is the grace and charm with which the first lady of our land greets the people. Mr. Churchill likes on occasion still to give his famous V-sign. Our American allies have a semi-circular sweep which abounds in a friendly, slick self-confidence. The Cockney "Oy" should always have a cocked thumb raised defiantly in the direction of the shoulder as demonstrated in the "Lambeth Walk". The French have a courtly, suave sweep through the air with the back of the hand. Readers can amuse themselves by extending the list or questioning the foregoing, but certain it is that the Germans have a wave all of their own—a quick nervous gesture proceeding from an arm which only seems to come alive at the wrist. By rights, I always feel, there should be a pointed beard to waggle besides the uplifted hand.

I have speculated sometimes on the significance of the soldiers' acknowledgement, their abrupt little hand waves and their motionless forms. They had discipline written all over them: even as they sat in the back of their lorries they were one hundred per cent "on parade". They looked, in their grey-green uniforms and battle helmets, almost completely inhuman until the amount of humanity revealed in a waving hand, scarcely raised above the lap, came breaking through. Here at all events is an interesting thesis for would-be students of national psychologies. I shall indulge in the reckless generalization that a freely arm-waving Germany would have played a very different role in history. Hitler found it just too easy to rule their waves.

Elberfeld 1938 and Liverpool Street 1950 are the termini of a stretch of experience in which Germany has often loomed large in my thoughts. When lorried infantry rolled their way through Elberfeld on that afternoon in May 1938 I was doing more than struggle with the intricacies of German grammar and sentence construction : I was embarking on my first real adventure in a foreign country. I had arrived in Germany in the spring of the year of Munich to study on the spot conditions in the German Confessional Church—that part of the German church which stood out against Nazi domination. I can still feel the shock of the first item of news which greated my arrival on a dimly-lit Wuppertal platform at midnight. I was to stay in a small theological college and the day before I arrived the son of the Principal, a young Protestant Minister, had been taken off to prison after preaching a "controversial" sermon from a text in the book of Daniel. As I walked with my guide through the silent streets I wondered what I was in for. Three days later I returned home to find a bald-headed, steely-eyed Gestapo representative closeted with the College bursar, checking my credentials and trying to ascertain why a young Scots minister should desire to stay in a College which several months previously had been closed down because of the sturdy independence of its staff.

How far away it all seems now—the daily trips to the house in the suburbs where the work of the theological College was proceeding in secret, the efforts to ensure that no unfriendly agent was following, the passwords that admitted to some clandestine Church assembly, the eagerly sought-for news of Niemöller and Koch and the others in prison or concentration camp. To a young minister straight from the normal student life of a Scottish University it all seemed completely unreal and not a little terrifying. The true Church in Germany had gone underground and to share its life I had perforce to go underground with it.

It was all very much a domestic dispute. Germans disputed with Germans for the "Crown rights" of Jesus

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Christ. Those who stood out for the independence of the Church were not thinking in political terms and certainly never regarded themselves as revolutionaries. This was a family quarrel, a struggle over Church administration: it was not thought of as a struggle against Hitler. When war came, representatives of the Confessional Church and its critics closed their ranks. Not that either party in the spring of 1938 appeared to have any thought of war against this country. The guns which Hitler had preferred to butter were not then, it seemed, pointing in our direction. Munich changed all that. My next visit to Germany was paid in December of the same year and it felt like a different country. Anti-British cartoons abounded. "Encirclement" was a word I had never heard in conversation six months earlier: now it was on everyone's lips. Suddenly everyone was German-colony conscious. It was the first example I had had of how a first class and wholly unscrupulous propaganda machine can change the climate of public opinion overnight —at least in Germany. The war had really started.

When next I went underground my companions were no longer Germans. Parachuting into German occupied France in June 1944, with my fellow-members of the Special Air Service Regiment, I found myself a member of the French resistance movement, and the Germans were the enemy. I wondered sometimes if any of those grey-green figures who fell in our ambushes or did their best to ambush us, had waved their prim and decorous greeting from the lorries I had watched in Elberfeld five years before. I suppose not. The Russian front had in all probability claimed them as the older and more experienced fighters long before this. The youngster of seventeen whom we captured in a sudden forest battle was typical of the troops we were facing. In his last desperate drive, Hitler was claiming every lad who could hold a rifle.

The French campaign over, it felt strange to be back in Germany again after a very different crossing of the Rhine. It was a disillusioned, and, oddly enough, a remarkably

friendly Germany. The farther East we penetrated the friendlier it became, and the more delighted people were that we were British and not Russian. This time I had no opportunity to check up on the fortunes of the Confessional Church. Reconnaissance work for Armoured Car Regiments kept us moving and then, when our rapid advance had brought us to the ruins of Kiel, German capitulation sent us flying home for new duties. Norway provided my last glimpse of the German military machine—Germans clearing the mines they seemed to have laid on every square inch of strategic Norwegian soil, Germans who no longer seemed to understand what had been happening to their country or themselves, Germans who no longer waved.

But my friend has been standing on the platform quite long enough. He is waving again, in case I have not spotted him. In his tall, erect figure all the streams of my German experiences seem to join. His father, a distinguished Protestant minister, risked his fortune and his life in the service of an independent German Church, and helped to guide the Confessional Church through the stormy waters of Nazi Germany. Like so many others his son wished to be loyal to the country of his birth and when war came, took his share. He was luckier than most, and prisoner-of-war life in Canada and this country, with all its drawbacks, nevertheless enriched his experience of life as it built up a strong healthy body. Now he is half-way through an agricultural course at the University of Bonn. If things stay quiet, as he says, he hopes to spend his life in agricultural research. All that he asks of life is the chance to work very hard at what happens to interest him: in these days it seems a good deal.

J. Fraser McLuskey.

THE BASIC DOCUMENTS OF PROTESTANTISM

HEINRICH HEPPE: *Reformed Dogmatics*. Foreword by Karl Barth. Revised and edited by Ernst Bizer. English translation by G. T. Thomson. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 50s. net.

HERE is an excuse for reminiscence. Back in 1932 and away in New Zealand I entered theological college, about the time when the echo of Karl Barth's "bell in the church-tower" was being heard in the ends of the world. It was in New Zealand and in Japan, as far as I can gather, that the impact of Barth's *Romerbrief* and all that it represented was most felt outside of Germany. It was said, with what authority I do not know, that only the influence of what was then called the "crisis-theology" held the Japanese Church in being in face of Marxism.

Be that as it may, my own Anglo-Saxon student generation at that same time was having its spiritual withers wrung in somewhat that same way. In New Zealand in the thirties Communism was an immediate challenge both in theory and practice. We had to call on Marxist economics to make sense of capitalist depression and its social effects; we had to face the fact that it was Communist leadership on which the defensive organizations of the employed and the unemployed depended both for light and life. In that situation our "modernism" seemed a limp and vapid creed, and it might have been Communism for most of *us*—it was for some—had Karl Barth and the Continentals not given us a biblically-grounded theology which could deal with justice and hold the Law in some relation to the Gospel. And since Marxism was forcing us to reckon with materialism and the power of the non-spiritual, it was an illumination to find that Barth could be a biblical theologian and an "economic

determinist", maybe the latter because the former: as in *The Epistle to the Romans*:

> "Can anyone rid me of a suspicion, amounting almost to a certainty, that the story of my life and the history of humanity could be more honestly described if the stomach rather than the head were adopted as the point of departure? . . . Can we not, by adopting a purely materialist philosophy of life, offer a better, or at least a more plausible interpretation of the general course of humanity or, to select particular aspects of it, of Primitive Christianity, of the Crusades, or of the Reformation?"

Here at anyrate was a theological seam worth mining, and one of the discouraging aspects of war-time experience in Britain was the discovery that by-and-large the British Church was inclined to tip a half-respectful lid to Barth, thank him for "a very necessary corrective", and continue on the broad and moderate road.

And now comes Heppe in English, as a witness that a sort of theological underground has been drawing its life through these long years from the basic theology of the Reformation, to such purpose that with the help of a famous —and non-ecclesiastical—publishing house it can now fling the basic documents of Protestant orthodoxy into the arena of public discussion, and demand with some reason and some optimism that they be dealt with on their merits. So one has to correct one's war-time pessimism and remember some significant facts. The fact for example that when in the thirties we turned to the Reformation under the tutelage of Barth, one could pick up Calvin's *Institutes* for a song in any second-hand bookstore, while in the late forties they were unobtainable until recently reprinted both in the U.S.A. and in Britain. And this year any new-book catalogue reflects the resurgence and present vitality of Luther and Calvin studies touching interests as diverse as epistemology, anthropology and social ethics.

Another symptom of the same kind has this month come under my own eye. I read most of a hundred seminary papers in Christian Ethics here in New York. They are

pre-occupied—and I gather they are reasonably representative of any major seminary in the country—with the characteristic problems of Reformation theology : with predestination and election ; with the authority of the Bible in the Church and with the rôle of the " community of the justified " in the world ; with the significance of Luther's *simul justus et peccator* as the ground of religious confidence without arrogance ; with the development of a non-casuistic methodology in Christian ethics as over against the misleading rationalism of traditional Catholicism ; and so on and so on. The interesting thing is that they are as far as the east is from the west removed from the Age-of-Reason liberalism which is a staple element in the diet of " main-line Protestantism " in this country. Between the theological revival and the general life of the Church there is a considerable gulf fixed. The gulf has never been so wide in Britain and maybe the publication of Heppe is a sign that it never will be.

Heppe himself in English is pretty forbidding. A 700-page *catena* of passages from sixteenth- to nineteenth-century Protestant orthodoxy (curiously described by the jacket-blurb as " the 300 years from Geneva to Westminster ! "), with the minimum of connecting commentary. In his Foreword Karl Barth speaks of his own first experience with Heppe, when in 1924 at the outset of his work as a theological teacher the German edition fell into his hands,

> " dusty, unattractive, almost like a table of logarithms, dreary to read, stiff and eccentric on almost every page I opened : in form and content pretty adequately corresponding to what I, like so many others, had described to myself decades ago, as the ' old orthodoxy '. Well, I had the grace not to be so slack. I read, I studied, I reflected . . . . I found a dogmatics which had both form and substance, oriented upon the central indications of the Biblical evidences for revelation, which it also managed to follow out in detail with astonishing richness."

" Dreary, stiff, eccentric . . ." . . . Not very hopeful material for a major publishing enterprise, so it would seem.

Yet the very man who makes these strictures testifies to his debt, and the translator backs him by affirming that

> "Heppe can work wonders in theological students. He is not only instructive. To an age fed on the husks of human enlightenment and to-day craving for the direct light of divine revelation Heppe is manna, and that in plenty."

Those who crave to feed on this food will have to bite through a very dry crust. Our fathers had the stomachs for this kind of diet, and those responsible for the present massive publishing venture seem to have ground for believing that to-day's hunger is fierce enough, and that the food is here.

The present reviser doesn't make the first bite easier with his indigestible Preface, a prize sample of how not to write theology.

> "By walking in its (orthodoxy's) tracks, we shall have pretty thoroughly to ask ourselves whether the old doctrine has always been stated and with sufficient clarity, so that substantially it could be nothing else than a challenge to *faith*, and whether it has validated this fact at all points with the necessary modesty and decisiveness. However surely in substance we are bound to no other pre-suppositions and however surely for long stretches we cannot take any other way, I as little imagine that the latter is the case."

But if in our day Protestantism has still to find a style, at least it seems to have found itself again.

ALEXANDER MILLER.

REVIEWS

A Year of Grace. By VICTOR GOLLANCZ. (Gollancz, 10s. 6d.)

This is a very unusual and valuable anthology. Its sub-title is "Passages chosen and arranged to express a mood about God and Man", and the theme throughout is that of men's relation to God and to one another. God is understood through man, and man is understood through God. It might be called a religious anthology but I believe that Mr. Gollancz would take strong exception to such a description because for him every aspect of life is religious; and nearly every aspect of life is to be found in this book.

I think that for me the greatest value of the anthology lies in the overwhelming conviction which it gives of the reality and unity of spiritual experience. "It is designed to be read," says Mr. Gollancz, "as if it were a continuous piece of writing by one hand." And it is the fact that one reads it in such a way that makes it, for an anthology, so very unusual. This book, with its record of the faiths and inspirations of so many men, shows us, in its completion, the living and dynamic faith of a man. It is convincing as a whole, by the loving care and skill with which it is compiled, and by the value and vitality of the selected passages, which come from the pens of men who have experienced deeply what they have written.

It might be supposed that these passages are selected from like-minded writers, but the reverse is the case. The anthology is outstanding for its variety and the catholicity of its sources. It is predominantly Jewish and Christian, but there are also contributions from Indian and Chinese sources, from Greek and Roman, and from agnostics and atheists. And many of the writers would normally be held, and some indeed held themselves to be, in the strongest opposition to one another.

There is a delightful variety throughout in the arrangement. There is prose and poetry and the selections vary in length from a single line to several pages. The simple and the complex, the familiar and unfamiliar are mingled together, and the reader will find alongside passages already known and loved a great deal that is new and exciting. Of special interest are the quotations from Jewish sources and from the Hasidic writings and stories, and some of the poems which I found most moving were to me quite unfamiliar. I am, unfortunately, not competent to speak of the musical passages which introduce the anthology and its five sections, but obviously for those who understand music they will contribute both to the unity and to the variety of the whole.

But because Mr. Gollancz has made a unity out of so much diversity, and has brought together so much that is common in the experience and teaching of different religions and of different approaches to life, there is here no woolly suggestion that all differences are unreal. "The book is full of contradictions," he says, "but the mood is a consistent one." The contradictions and difficulties are accepted, and this is no collection of nice passages designed to give a comfortable feeling to religiously-minded people who dislike grappling with religious dogma and thought. The Anthology is deeply mystical and

deeply theological and philosophical, as well as practical, and these approaches are in no way opposed. And while much of it is—or appears to be—simple and direct, many passages demand the most careful and thoughtful reading. It is a book which is profoundly comforting, and yet should make its readers feel profoundly uncomfortable.

Finally I should like to draw attention to the couplet which closes the anthology :

" Friend, let this be enough. If thou wouldst go on reading,
Go and thyself become the writing and the meaning,"

for what emerges from the writing is a way of life born of the conviction that " love with pity and mercy as its chief attributes is the only reality ". And the desire to embrace such a way of life and the conviction of its validity for all men is the spiritual experience which this book gives. I for one am profoundly grateful to Mr. Gollancz for offering to the public this experience of his own " Year of Grace ".

DIANA COLLINS.

Is God Evident? By Gerald Heard. Faber, 12s. 6d.

This is a surprisingly good book. Surprisingly, for the following reasons : (*a*) It is, on the whole, very readable—the present reviewer has up till now never succeeded in finishing a book by Mr. Heard on account of the arid deserts and impassable crags of his style; (*b*) It is extremely well-informed, and succeeds in imparting the information clearly and lightly ; (*c*) (Most surprising of all) it is, so far as it goes, nearly all perfectly acceptable to the orthodox Christian. There is, indeed, a fear that it will be overlooked by Christians who are (on other grounds perhaps rightly) suspicious of Mr. Heard's syncretistic faith. If they do, they will miss much that is informative and extremely interesting, if not all equally convincing. It is only here and there that the book reveals the author's impatience with Christian claims to a unique revelation.

The subtitle is " An Essay towards a Natural Theology ", and the bulk of the book looks not unlike the kind of apologetic that one associates with Hibbert, or even with Gifford, Lectures : the distinguished theist tells us what books he has been reading lately in the field

of the Natural Sciences and what philosophical conclusions he deduces therefrom, building up another variant on the Teleological Argument for the existence of God. But Mr. Heard performs this familiar feat with distinctive gestures of his own. For he really does know his Natural Sciences—particularly astronomy and evolutionary biology—and, at the other end of the scale, he is really interested in the phenomena and the processes of mysticism. Indeed, he claims that the capacity to " produce saints " is of evidential value—and, of course, he goes on rightly to point out that the Christian Church has not the monopoly of this capacity.

He starts from physics and astronomy, to consider whether man's claim to freedom can be substantiated, and whether, if substantiated, it is of any real significance, given the colossal disproportion between man and the vast universe that astrophysics now reveals to us. He shows, on the contrary, that man is probably about at the mid-way point between the distances revealed by the galaxies' histories and the sub-microscopic worlds (he quotes Malebranche's saying, when first shown a telescope : " This is an end of Size.") The World is shown to be a world of " lawful freedom ".

Then he discusses the nature of Life and man's emergence in the vital arena. This soon leads to an interesting discussion of the old " problem of evil ", in which he manages to say old things in a new way. Darwin he describes, arrestingly, as " the great maker of the Mythos that should rule, and finally destroy, Biological and Economic Man." But the biggest problem to be faced, and he faces it fully and most capably, is this : Granted the most exalted place for man in the evolutionary series—yet can, and will, he keep it up ? Other lines of evolutionary development have come to an end ; are not the very same tell-tale features of a recession beginning to be visible in man—the features of high specialization, gigantism, and " intraspecial struggle and destruction " ? Or are there signs of other elements which may outweigh these marks of decline ? He gives five reasons to suggest that the decline may be able to be arrested—all interesting, though some rather speculative. He discusses usefully the biological and metaphysical significance of man's power to " tame " animals—and underlines that this power is highest in the saint. Indeed, he uses this phenomenon as a suggestive (though no doubt, risky) analogy for " redemption ". He makes sensible and not extravagant use of " E.S.P. " (the " extra-sensory perception " that some recent investigators have been studying) and of psychical research ; and provides

constant illumination by judicious use of curious features in Natural History. Occasionally we meet barbarous sentences such as this: "to align the emotions by the right psychological exercises, affirmational meditation, alert passivity, integral thought, dynamic waiting" (which is meant to be a description of the well-known "prayer of silence"). He refers to, but does not properly understand, the "Barthian" (and "Brunnerian") objections to "natural theology". He uses, a little uncritically, Sir E. Whittaker's application of the Law of entropy to prove the doctrine of creation. His connection of indeterminacy in physics with free will in man is highly questionable. And finally the Christian, whatever his profound and grateful agreements, is bound to question whether Mr. Heard appreciates the Christian emphasis upon the Divine Transcendence, the "Aseity" of the Blessed Trinity. But it would be carping to end on this note, when Mr. Heard has so much enlarged our vision even of what we may have ultimately to disagree with him about.

M. J. K., C.R.

A Theological Word Book of the Bible. Edited by Alan Richardson. S.C.M. Press. 25s.

Many of the most important words in the Bible, such as covenant, grace, and love, are familiar words in contemporary speech, but in the Bible they have a much richer meaning than they have in the ordinary English of to-day and sometimes quite a different meaning. But it is not easy for the lay reader of the Bible to find out what the original or authentic meaning is. He cannot be expected to possess a whole series of learned commentaries. Moreover, as a result of recent study and research much fresh light has been thrown on the meaning of biblical words. This "Word Book", which mediates the fruits of international scholarship to the general reader, will be found invaluable not only by ministers and theological students but also by everyone who wants to deepen his understanding of the message of the Bible.

(Ed.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Sirs,

At the *Frontier* Luncheon on 25th October we were invited to put in letters to you the reflections on Sir John Maud's address which our wits were too slow to produce immediately, or which we hadn't at the meeting the time or courage to produce. To take up this invitation and to make it an excuse for remarks of a seriously critical character must seem ungracious, but I am emboldened by the thought that no remarks of mine could weaken the impression which the speaker obviously made upon the audience.

I am under the disadvantage of having no text before me and of having taken no notes, but as I understand the tenor of the address Sir John Maud was making the point that the great bureaucracies, governmental and other, which are characteristic of our age, are not in themselves to be regarded as diabolical, anti-Christian or even anti-human. These organizations can be instruments of the Divine Will, and are only justified so far as they are so. Together with this point Sir John Maud was making another, which might be considered as part of it but which I prefer to consider quite separately, that within a great organization, as elsewhere, one should remember that one's neighbour has a liver, a wife, and possibly even a bank balance; in short that he *is* one's neighbour.

As to this latter point I see no difficulty. The bureaucrat regarding his colleagues at close quarters should surely be able to think of them as human, and to treat them accordingly, even if the enraged members of the public, who see them from a distance, are unable to think of them, or of him, in this way. About what I have treated as the first point there seem, however, to be not only difficulties but dangers. To be brief, and to risk for the sake of brevity the charge of making a rather cheap joke, I will put it that there seems to be some confusion between the Divine Will and the policy of His Majesty's Government. It is to execute the latter that Government Departments were invented and for which they exist. The well-run Department, judged by any standard of efficiency which could hope for practical recognition, is one as beautifully arranged for carrying out bad policies as good ones. The Civil Servant, however eminent, is there to carry out orders. He has his discretion, of course, but he would be exceeding his function if he used it to denature the policies he has to execute. It is somewhere beyond the range of the bureaucrat's duties that one must look if one is to enquire whether a bureaucracy is to be the instrument

of anything good. Any suspicion of what one might call a Christian euphoria in regard to these great organizations seems to me to be out of place. Any great bureaucracy is a potential danger, and should be watched like a mad dog. It is a creature of enormous power which can be used for good or ill. History hardly leads one to believe that great concentrations of power will most commonly be used for good.

All my niggling has led only to a platitude, but it is, I submit, a good one.

C. H. Sisson.

Dear Sirs,

I thought the lunch to-day was a great thing—so much so that I feel moved to make a comment to you in writing :—

First that to tell an impotent man that he is potent is not a solution. Most of us are supremely impotent so far as influencing either the bureaucrats or the technocrats or the official rulers goes.

Secondly that Sir John appeared to divide his talk into two parts, in both of which I thought he failed entirely to solve or even adequately to state the problem. There is no use in telling a cog in Leviathan's machine that he must by " creative imagination " make his impersonal work bear personal fruit. The crux is the matter of responsibility ; the civil servant is not responsible for the legislation he is delegated to put into effect nor is he ultimately responsible for the decisions he takes in administering it. If you divorce action from responsibility—as bureaucracy, as far as I can see, inevitably must—the rest follows as the night the day, in spite of Sir John's statements to the contrary. That was the first part.

The second part was about the " specifically Christian contribution " to the problem. This in effect was " good will " and " service " put into the terms of Christ's washing of the disciples' feet. There is nothing, except that Christ did it, specifically Christian about that.

I had the pleasure of bringing two non-Christian guests with me (possibly wrongly) whose mission in life it is, in fact, to practice almost all those virtues which were recommended as a specifically Christian contribution, in a far, far more effective way than I, for instance, ever have done or can hope to do.

In short it appeared that what was done was to lay a thickish spread of immensely brilliant, attractive and well chosen words over a sink which remains fully as iniquitous in spite of them.

Richard Hardy.

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